



**Rhode Island Department of Human Services**

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September 18, 2020

Honorable Patricia A. Serpa, Chairwoman  
House Committee on Oversight  
101 State House  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairwoman Serpa:

Please accept the attached report as the State's most recent update on the RIBridges system, which covers the reporting period August 16, 2020 – September 15, 2020. This document provides monthly updates on the following topics:

- System performance and improvement;
- DHS staffing and employee training;
- Pending applications;
- SNAP timeliness and lobby/DHS Call Center summaries;
- CCAP off-cycle payments;
- LTSS interim payments and;
- Correspondence with federal partners (if any)

We appreciate your continued advocacy on behalf of those we serve, your interest in the health of the RIBridges system and the progress made to address outstanding issues. As always, please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CE Hawkins".

Courtney E. Hawkins, Director



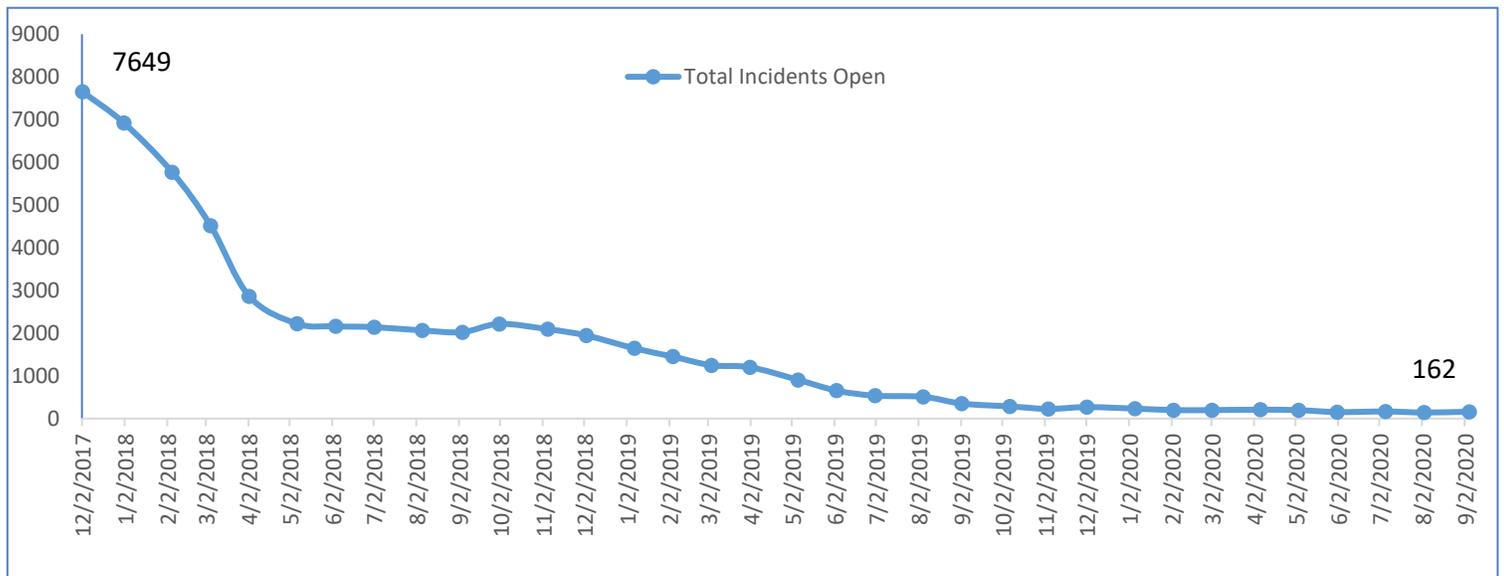
# RI Bridges: Monthly Update

## September 2020

Our team takes its charge seriously in promoting health, nurturing quality of life, and being there for Rhode Islanders when needed. Our oversight of work on RI Bridges is an important part of the equation. With system stabilization under our belt, we continue to focus on ensuring full compliance of the system. This report provides an update on our efforts and progress to date.

### SYSTEM PERFORMANCE + IMPROVEMENT

Due to a focused effort on consistent and stable system operations, the number of new and existing incidents (when the system does not operate as expected for a DHS client, worker or provider) has decreased by 98% since December 2017. As of September 2, 2020, there were 162 open incidents.



### DHS STAFFING + TRAINING

#### Hiring Update

DHS continues to make progress in hiring candidates for critical positions identified. Since August, DHS hired three employees. These include:

- 1 Employment and Career Advisor dedicated to the Providence field office
- 1 Human Services Policy and Systems Specialist dedicated to the Child Care Licensing Unit
- 1 Senior Resource Specialist dedicated to the Weatherization Program

## Training Overview

### Overview

Training Topic	Training Date	# of Training Hours	# of New Staff	# of Current Staff
SNAP Training (4 – 1.5-hour sessions)	8/19/2020 8/26/2020 9/2/2020 9/3/2020	6	0	19
SNAP Mini Training: Students (3 – two- hour sessions)	8/24/2020 8/25/2020 9/8/2020	6	0	52
Case Maintenance (1 – 30 – minute session)	8/18/2020	.50	0	5
GPA Burial (2) (1-30-minutes session)	8/17/2020	.75	0	3
Claims, Collection and Recovery Unit (2-1 and half hour sessions)	8/17/2020 8/19/2020	3	0	38
Health Insurance and Income (1 – 3-hour session)	8/17/2020	3	0	20
Resource Referral (1-1- hour session)	8/19/2020	1	0	10
Resource and Health Insurance (2- three- hour sessions)	8/24/2020 8/31/2020	6	0	33
FTI and HIPPA (7-half hour sessions)	8/18/2020 8/24/2020 8/26/2020 8/31/2020 9/8/2020 9/9/2020	3.5	0	250
STAR Supervisor Training	8/19/2020	1.5	0	7
Introduction to MAGI	9/14/2020	2	0	20
Multicultural Competency Training: Module One (4 -one and half hour sessions)	8/20/2020 8/21/2020 9/10/2020	6	0	41
Multicultural Competency Training: Module Two (1 -one and half hour session)	8/18/2020	1.5	0	8
<b>Totals</b>		<b>40.75</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>506</b>

*\*current number of staff trained is a duplicate number*

## Workshop Descriptions

**Case Maintenance:** This training focuses on standardizing processes associated with working cases in RI Bridges. It is a remote training delivered by way of an online audio and web conferencing platform. The learning outcomes for the training are as follows:

- Understanding the Case Maintenance Checklist
- Learning where to find helpful documents (QRGs, Transmittals, etc.)
- Implementing proper case maintenance practices

**Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP):** The SNAP Training is designed to introduce Eligibility Technicians to SNAP program policy and RIBridges. The virtual sessions are focused on SNAP policy.

**General Public Assistance (GPA) Burial (2):** This training focuses on introducing ESSU staff to GPA Burial, including a program overview, a description of the GPA Burial application requirements, and a demo of processing the application in RIBridges. It is the second part of a 4 -part series.

**Multicultural Competency Training:** The Multicultural Competence Modules offer contextualized, scaffolded anti-oppression educational workshops for RIDHS employees. There are four foundational modules that introduce participants to frameworks, concepts, and strategies so RIDHS personnel are better equipped to advance its diversity, equity, and inclusion strategic goals individually and collectively. The workshops are offered virtually. Each session meets for 1.5-2 hours. The format for the sessions includes facilitated dialogue with individual and group activities.

- **Module One:** *Advancing Anti-Oppression in the Workplace* is the first of the four workshops. This session presents and discusses the multicultural competencies that are necessary to advance anti-oppression in the workplace (e.g., awareness, understanding, knowledge, interaction, and sensitivity).
- **Module Two:** *Understanding Social Identity, Power, and Privilege in the Workplace* is the second of the four workshops. This session presents and discusses the ways social identity, power, and privilege shape the lived work experiences of all social groups.

**Health and Insurance and Resources:** This training covers the policy surrounding countable and excluded resources for Medicaid and LTSS applications and renewals. Participants will view resource documentation, understand how to calculate total countable resources and be able to enter resources into the IES system.

**Resource Referral:** Participants will understand the most common sources for completing a resource referral, including annuities, trusts and promissory notes. Participants will learn how to complete resource referrals which is the process for having them reviewed and entering them into the IES system. Participants will also gain understanding of the policy for the three complicated financial instruments (annuities, trusts and promissory notes) and how these may impact the resources, income and review for transfer of assets for applicants.

**FTI/HIPAA:** This is a required training for all DHS employees. This refresher training covered the federal regulations and internal procedures that staff need to follow in protecting customer information.

**Claims, Collection and Recovery Unit (CCRU) Training:** The goal of this training is to increase DHS Staff capacity on general and complex operational procedures for the referral of an overpayment within RIBridges. The learning objectives:

- Increase job knowledge regarding CCRU processes
- Increase ability to utilize RIBridges system to make a referral to the CCRU
- Understand what constitutes an overpayment

**STAR Supervisor Training:** This training was designed by supervisors for supervisors. The goals of the trainings are as follows:

- Instill the DHS Guiding Principles in everyday work
- Support supervisors by enhancing leadership, coaching, and mentoring skills
- Build professional capacity through the DHS workforce
- Create tools that encourage and support a culture of continuous improvement
- Understand what constitutes good supervision
- Incorporate the DHS guiding principles in everyday work and decision making
- Reset from past experiences and looking to the future of DHS
- Identify behavioral styles

## PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

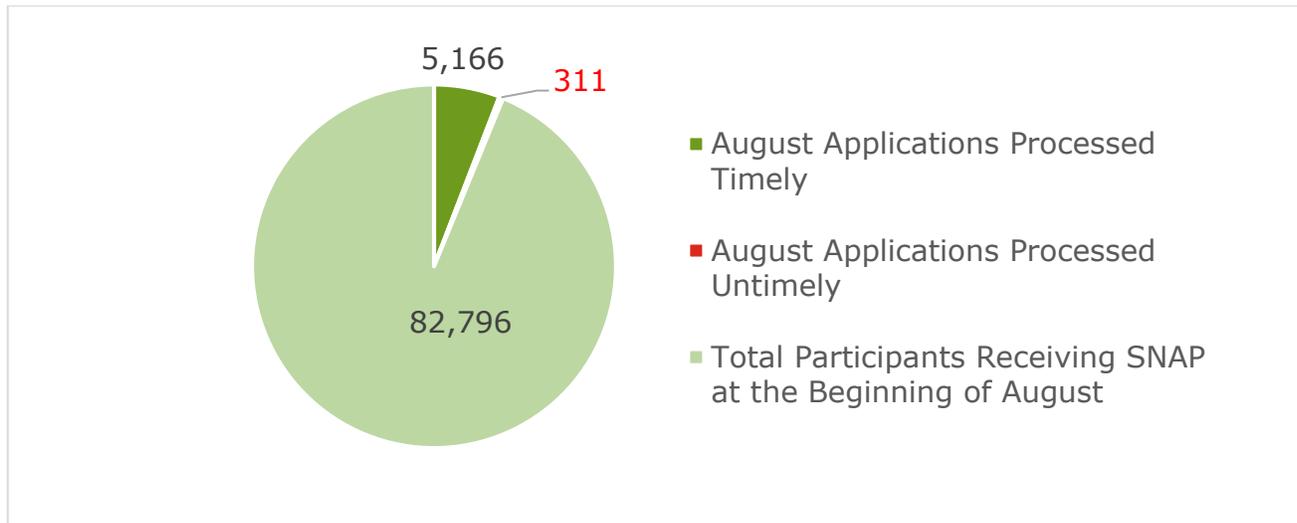
The State continues to prioritize access to benefits. As of September 14, 2020, the number of pending new applications across all programs is 4,197. The total of overdue pending applications awaiting State action is 1,235.

	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	
SNAP Expedited	17	36	53	18	78	96	149
SNAP Non-Expedited	699	404	1,103	37	23	60	1,163
CCAP	22	142	164	3	7	10	174
GPA Burial	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
SSP	0	19	19	0	4	4	23
GPA	14	36	50	12	18	30	80
RIW	146	94	240	27	33	60	300
Undetermined Medical	15	170	185	32	783	815	1,000
Medicaid-MAGI	1	2	3	36	30	66	69
MPP	4	33	37	0	6	6	43
Complex Medicaid	12	25	37	14	78	92	129
LTSS	113	762	875	17	174	191	1,066
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,043</b>	<b>1,723</b>	<b>2,766</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>1,235</b>	<b>1,431</b>	<b>4,197</b>

*\*LTSS backlog data is temporarily coming from a separate source from RIBridges while the primary dashboard that collects data is currently undergoing improvements.*

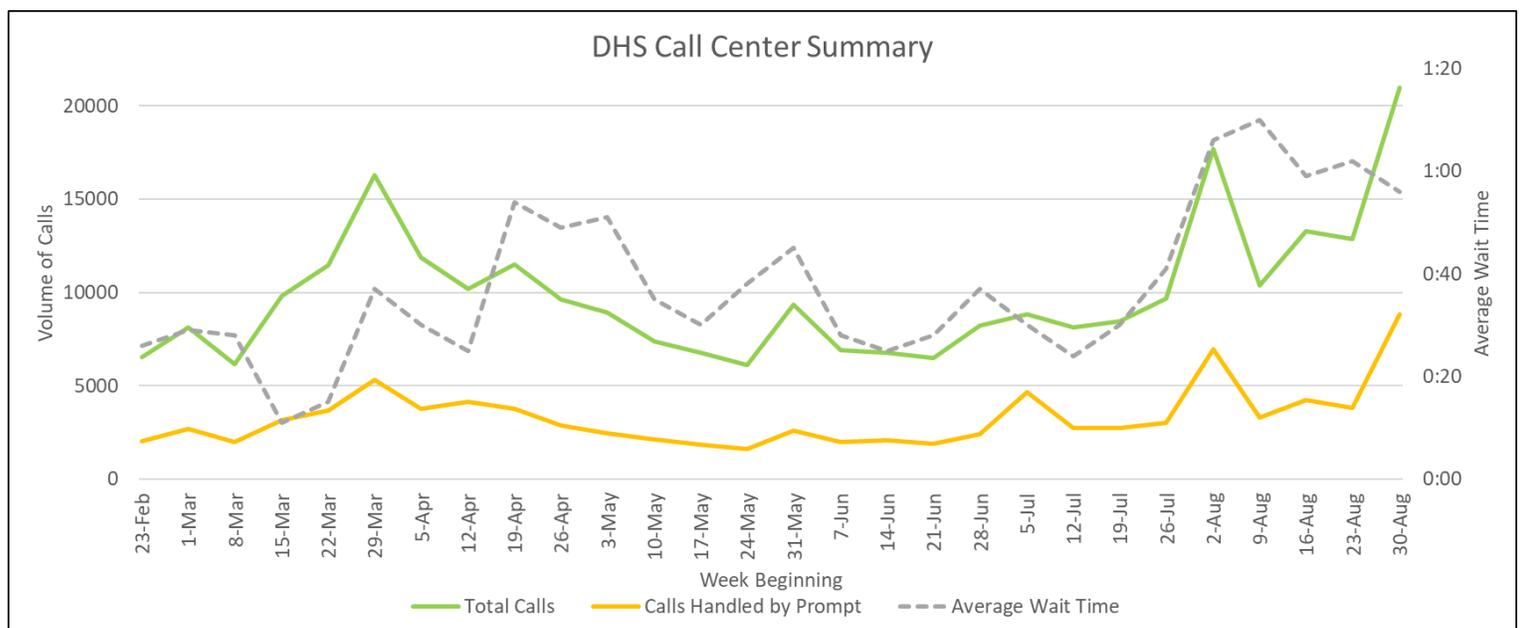
## SNAP TIMELINESS

In August 2020, SNAP benefits were issued timely to nearly 82,800 households. Despite the impact of COVID-19, over 94percent of new SNAP applications were processed timely. The number of applications not process timely represents less than1 percent of the SNAP population receiving benefits.



## CALL CENTER

In August 2020, the average wait time was 62 minutes, 5 seconds. With the close of lobby facing operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, the DHS Call Center capacity was increased to accommodate interviews and questions for public benefits.



## CCAP OFF-CYCLE PAYMENTS

Below are the total number of batch payments made to child care providers between 8/11 – 9/10/2020.

Batch	Date Issued	# of Providers	Amount after Union/PAC removed
5	08/11/2020	557	\$2,722,661
5A	08/13/2020	3	\$9,157
5B	08/20/2020	4	\$8,551
6	08/25/2020	564	\$2,675,882
6A	08/27/2020	4	\$45,420
6B	09/03/2020	11	\$14,950
7	09/08/2020	559	\$2,579,313
7A	09/10/2020	6	\$12,799

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (5, 5A & 5B))	564	\$2,740,369
Off-cycle (5A & 5B)	7	\$17,708
Provider off-cycle/total	1.24%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	0.65%	-

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (6, 6A & 6B)	579	\$2,736,251
Off-cycle (6A & 6B)	15	\$60,370
Provider off-cycle/total	2.59%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	2.21%	-

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (7 & 7A)	565	\$2,592,112
Off-cycle (7A)	6	\$12,799
Provider off-cycle/total	1.06%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	0.49%	-

Batch 7B will process Thursday 09/17/2020

## LTSS INTERIM PAYMENTS

We continue to make progress in reducing the LTSS backlog of applications. As of this submission, there are 174 overdue LTSS applications pending state action.

Through the contingency process, which ensures nursing and assisted living facilities receive prompt reimbursement from the State, Rhode Island has paid out approximately 120,000 dollars in interim payments to facilities for the state fiscal year 2021. The fiscal year for 2021 began on July 1, 2020.

Our payment reconciliation process remains ongoing as we continue to meet with long term care facilities across the state. In total, the state has paid approximately \$149 million, and we have collected about \$94.2 million in reconciliation payments so far from nursing home facilities. This represents approximately 63% of the total amount of contingency payments made.

## UPDATE ON RECERTIFICATIONS PROCESS

The State has verified that Medicaid renewals were appropriately initiated by the RI Bridges System in compliance with the CMS approved renewal plan.

## CORRESPONDENCE WITH FEDERAL PARTNERS

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) are important partners to the State. We continue to communicate regularly to review progress with the RIBridges system.

- September 11, 2020: USDA approval of Rhode Island's contract amendment #48 with Deloitte Consulting LLP